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The West Louisville Air Toxics Study

The West Louisville Air Toxics Study documented that there were high concentrations of harmful air toxics, including cancer causing chemicals, in specific neighborhoods in Louisville Metro. A U.S. Environmental Protection Agency study that included modeling of reported emissions, concluded that for air in Jefferson County (Louisville) had the highest potential risk for adverse effects of all of the counties in the eight southeastern states. In the absence of federal and state air toxics programs to provide a safe environment for the citizens of Louisville Metro, the Air Pollution Control Board adopted the Strategic Toxic Air Reduction (STAR)

The first component of STAR establishes the overall framework and methodologies for determining risk from toxic air contaminants (TAC's) and a general duty not to emit a TAC in a quantity or duration that is harmful to the health and welfare of humans, animals and plants.

The second component of STAR is regulating large and moderate industrial and commercial operations that are responsible for the largest, single-source emissions of most toxic air pollutants.

The third component of STAR is regulating and reducing emissions from minor sources.

Identifying Toxic Problems in Louisville

In the spring of 1996, the Jefferson County Health Department received a grant to undertake a study to determine the health needs and concerns of the residents of western Jefferson County. This study was called the West County Community Involvement Project (WCCIP). Confidential written environmental health surveys were collected and public meetings were used to solicit input from citizens. The result was an Action Agenda listing 38 concerns (with six identified as priority items) and 15 recommendations. The Action Agenda was presented to Louisville and Jefferson County elected officials on September 3, 1996.

Given the success of assessing the issues of concern, the participants in the WCCIP continued to meet, forming the WCCIP Task Force, believing the Task Force should move toward resolving the identified environmental and environmental health problems in order to improve the health in the neighborhoods. With over $300,000 in funding, the University of Louisville and the WCCIP Task Force joined forces to begin addressing the identified problems.

The Task Force members agreed that the first "action item" should be a comprehensive air monitoring project of the Rubbertown Industrial Complex area. Additional funding has beens appropriated by the Kentucky Legislature over the years with the help of

Senator Gerald Neal. In 2003, the WCCIP Task Force was renamed the West Jefferson County Community (WJCCTF) distinguishing itself as an independent tax exempt non-profit organization. The initial air monitoring project became known as the West Louisville Air Toxics Study (WLATS)

In September 2002, EPA Region 4 released a county-by-county *Air Toxics Relative Risk Screening Analysis* that identified Jefferson County as having the highest potential adverse impact of toxics of the 736 counties in the eight southeast states.

In October 2003, the final results from the WLATS identified seventeen chemicals that were monitored at levels greater than 1 in one million and one additional chemical chloroprene. Two chemicals were monitored at cancer risk levels greater than 100 in one millions. 1,3 butadiene was monitored at 500 in one million. An additional twelve chemicals were monitored at cancer risk levels greater than 10 in one million. The cumulative monitored cancer risk at each of the twelve sites exceeded 100 in one million.

The findings were presented to Mayor Abramson who then charged the Air Pollution Control District to "fix it". Thus the STAR

For Presentation and discussion::

Developing relationships with:

- Political representatives
- Scientific community
- EPA
- Residential Communities
- Other Environmental Groups
- Industry